POETICAL EXCURSIONS

IN

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

——— Casiâ, atque aliis intexens suavibus herbis,
Mollia luteolâ pingit vaccinia calthâ.
Et vos, O Lauri, carpam; et Te, proxima, myrte;
Sic positæ quoniam suaves miscetis odores.

Virgil. Eclog. II. ver. 47.

CRAISBROOK CASTLE.

An awful Pharos to each British King!

LONDON,
Printed for N. CONANT (Successor to Mr. WHISTON), in FLEET-STREET.
MDCCLXXVII.

POETICAL EXCURSIONS

IN

THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

——— Cætâ, eoque aliis inelegans fuavibus herbis,
Mollia buccoli pingit vaccinia calthâ.
Et-via, O Laure, cetyam; et Te, proxima, myrte;
Sic positæ quoniam suaves miscetis odores.
Virgil. Eclog. II. ver. 49.

LONDON,

Printed for M. CONSTABLE (Successor to Mr. WHISTON), in Bartholomew-Close.

MDCCLXXVII.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD CAMDEN.

MY LORD,

A SUBJECT of the Engliſh Conſtitution offers you this Tribute of Eſteem, becauſe He admired your Conduct in your judicial, as He admires it in your ſenatorial Capacity; and becauſe his Opinion of your public Virtue is corroborated by the Cenſure, and Calumny, with which you have been honoured from Adminiſtration.

I had determined publickly to preſent the following Poem only to One who, I knew, poſſeſſed great Abilities; and who,

 I was

I was firmly perſwaded, poſſeſſed Integrity. To diſpute your Talents, my Lord, would be ridiculous; and to doubt that the Motives are generous which impel your noble Courſe in the political Field, would argue a Degree of Miſanthropy to which *my* mind hath not *yet* arrived.

So highly do I reſpect, and ſo warmly do I love every virtuous Effort of Intellect, and Imagination, that I am reſolved never to proſtitute my literary homage: and I think I have not, by this Addreſs, taken a preſumptuous Liberty with the Title of CAMDEN. For I am ſure, if the Stanzas which, I hope, will afford you ſome Pleaſure in one of your Hours of Relaxation, procure little Glory to the Poet, their Sincerity, their Frankneſs, their bold, and important Truths, will do Honour to the Man.

Your Penetration, my Lord, will immediately obſerve, that my Reſpect of *you* is not debaſed with any affected, hypocritical, and ſervile Contempt of *myſelf*. If this Letter had been written

in the uſual Style of Dedication, it would have been totally inconſiſtent with the capital Objects of your Lordſhip's Eloquence, and of my Numbers.

Should I, in *my* Situation, with my Feelings, and with my dear-bought Knowledge, inſult you with a fooliſh Flattery, that couched no ſelfiſh Deſign; or ſhould I endeavour to win you to my Intereſt by an artful Panegyrick, I ſhould be particularly, and wantonly criminal. I am formed by Nature with a Love of ſocial Pleaſure; and perhaps with a Taſte for ſocial Elegance: yet it hath pleaſed Providence always to aſſign me very humble Accommodations; and He hath obliged me to paſs many of my Hours in Converſation with myſelf. When Wiſdom cannot perſwade us, my Lord, Habit compels us to adopt a Degree of Philoſophy. I feel my Spirit every Day exalted nearer to Independence; and I am happy in this Improvement, though the Cauſe of my moral Diſcipline is not very ſoothing to my Vanity. In the ſevere, but ſalutary School of Adverſity, I found

that

that my Exiſtence was to be ſupported, adorned, and recreated by internal Supplies. Hence I endeavoured, as far as I was permitted by my Abilities, and my precarious, fluctuating, and limited Situations, to expand, enrich, and invigorate my Mind. In the Effects of my Endeavours I have not been diſappointed. In the worſt of Seaſons, they have been my active, my noble, my exhilarating Reſources. While, in very trying Emergencies, I have enjoyed the Dignity of Reaſon, and the Luxury of Imagination, I have looked with Pity, from my homely Solitude, on the glittering Slaves of Wealth, and Grandeur. Surely *that* Man has not lived in vain, who, in a licentious, and venal Age, can be happy without ſenſual Pleaſure, and who fears not the Frown of a Tyrant.

How can this Addreſs be dictated by Intereſt? I have long driven ſanguine Hope from my Breaſt; that gay, deluſive Companion of my youthful Years. *Then* you are honeſt, my Lord, as well as great. Therefore I as little expect that

you will again be Chancellour of England, in *this* Reign, as that I ſhall ever be a Favourite of Fortune.

I am, my Lord, with true Reſpect,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Moſt obedient, humble Servant,

Iſle of Wight,
Feb. 14th, 1777.

* * * * * * * * *

you will again be Chancellour of England, in my Reign, as
that I shall ever be a Favourite of Fortune.

I am, my Lord, with true Respect,

YOUR LORDSHIP'S

Most obedient, humble Servant,

The of Wight.
Feb. 24th, 1727.

POETICAL EXCURSIONS, &c.

ONCE more, Elyſian Iſle,
Receive me with thy vernal Smile;
Nor to a grateful Muſe
Thy powerful Aid refuſe:
Propitious to the Poet's mind,
Thy ſtriking Scenes impart;
His Fancy warm, improve his art;
Who from the anxious Follies of Mankind,

Who from the ſelfiſh, and the ſplendid throng,

Harraſſed with Trifles, joys to flee

~~To ſacred Solitude, and Thee,~~

To wake his long-neglected ſong;—

By pleaſing Melancholy rapt, delights to rove,

On thy bright Verdure, through ſome twilight grove;

There to recall the mighty dead,

Who greatly thought, or greatly bled;

To ſee, through Fancy's magic eye,

Lycurgus plan, and Cato die;

There, in poetic Luxury to grieve;

To melt in ſtrong imagined woe;

The ſympathetick Sigh to heave;

Till, as the ſweet enchantment ſteals,

It nobly triumphs, and he feels

Enthuſiaſtick Tears for ſtruggling Virtue flow.

And oft the Bard's elaſtick Mind

To lighter Images inclined;

In concord with Anacreon's meaſure,
Courts the jovial Gods of Pleaſure;
For livelier Aid invokes the tuneful Maids;
And feels a modern Cyprus in thy ſhades.
Then Ideas fair, and gay
Chace the rapid Hours away;
Then, created by the Muſe,
A feſtal groupe the Poet views;
Of Dance, of Song, of Love, the Powers,
Their ſprightly Revels hold amid thy Bowers:
Bacchus, and his Train are there;
Roſy Cupids, light as air,
Meet his warm, enamoured eye,
Scattering Odours as they fly.
He hears the Flute's relaxing Sound;
A purple Glory ſpreads around:
The Graces, and the Cyprian Queen
Advance and dignify the Scene;

The Graces model Beauty's Pride,
The Luſtre to her Charms apply,
Direct the lightning of her Eye,
Wave her celeſtial Robe, and o'er her ſteps preſide.
Through all his Frame he feels her ſoft controul;
Each Motion charms the Sight; each Look pervades the Soul.

Since, then, alike the Grave, and Gay,
The moral, and the ſportive Lay
I cultivate in Thee, my favourite Iſle,
And all my pungent woes beguile;
Oh! let thy rural Genius deign
Again to animate my Strain;
Enlarge my Judgement, guide my Fire,
For with no mean Ambition I aſpire
O'er a fair Siſter-Iſle thy Beauties to diffuſe:—
To conſecrate thy humble Name,
And rank it, in poetic Fame,
With Cooper's-Hill, with Windſor, with Vaucluſe;—

From

From rigorous Time to vindicate my Theme;
To give, by my deſcriptive Page,
Congenial Minds, through every Age,
In Thee to trace the bold, romantick ſhoar;
From the ſteep mountain to explore
The Charms of the contiguous Vale,
Where blooms the paſtoral Scene; where breathes the paſtoral Tale;
Where Nature knows not Art's Alloy,
The Vale of Peace, and unembittered Joy:—
To bid thy Flowers perennial blow,
Thy Trees with never-fading verdure grow,
In ſilver Strains thy ſoft Medina flow,
Winding, and clear, and ſmooth, as Arno's hallowed Stream.

Oh! Knighton, where the Sight perſues
Rich, various, and majeſtic views;
Oft, when the early Lark aſcends the Skies,
Let me from Life's Oblivion riſe,

And to thy Land-mark's Height repair,
To breathe it's Down's elaſtick Air;
With Eye poetic to ſurvey
The Glories of the new-born Day;
Where Scenes of Nature, Works of Art,
Expand the Mind, and move the Heart;
Where, on the Soul, the Beautiful, and Grand
Impreſs the Ocean, and the Land;
Here, an extended Vale of Sweets
The Senſes, and the Fancy greets;
There, with ignoble Canvaſs furled,
Britannia's floating Caſtles ride,
The Spirit loſt that armed their Pride,
That ſent their Thunder, once, round an affrighted World.

When thus, by Proſpect, and by Thought,
My mind to Harmony is wrought;
Already conſcious of the riſing Strain,
The Path to Knighton I regain.—

My

My Progreſs is arreſted near the Vane;
For there I view, below, the Manſion, and the Trees,
Not yet ſaluted by the gentleſt Breeze;
And there I take my favourite Stand,
Their ſolemn Graces to command.
'Tis Silence, all; and all around
I feel the Force of rural Ground.
But, hark! the diſtant voice of Chanticleer,
With Note protracted ſoothes my Ear;
And hark, I hear attentive Tray
The Flock directing on their Way.
While yet no human triflers, vain, and rude,
On Thoughts contemplative intrude;
No Noiſe, nor Tinſel of the Day;
The Manſion ſays, or ſeems to ſay;—
(The Manſion is a Fabrick old,
Ivy, and Yew it's Walls infold;
A Grove, in high, and verdant Pride,
Extends a winding Length on either Side;

The Nod majeſtick of the Groves
Their Manſion's Oracle approves.)

" Although my blooming Ground is low,
" Even from that Ground a Bard ſhould know,
" That as this hallowed Houſe, at firſt was given
" To Spirits who converſed with Heaven,
" None yet Admittance here ſhould find
" But Beings of exalted Mind.
" Or They whoſe gentle Natures could not bear
" Society's inclement Air,
" Who, Vice deſerting, but to Virtue true,
" Have bid a faithleſs World adieu.
" Or They who have a Right to claim
" A ſacred, but a proſtituted Name,
" That ſuch a godlike Habit comprehends!—
" The few ſincere, and ardent *Friends*,
" Whoſe Lives, nor Intereſt, nor low Pleaſure blends,
" But noble Means, exerted ſtill for noble Ends:—

" Or

" Or Poets bleſſed with rich, expanded Views,
" With Souls impaſſioned by the Muſe;—
" Or They, whoſe generous Boſoms prove
" All the divine Romance of Love.
" Oh! hither freely then deſcend;
" Thou in Fitzmaurice haſt a Friend;
" Well-pleaſed, Fitzmaurice I contain;
" For He is worthy to renew
" The happy Age that Poets drew,
" Kind Hoſpitality's primæval Reign.
" His liberal Converſe, and *my* varied Fields,
" The ſtriking Images our Iſland yields,
" Will form thy Genius for the Day,
" Will give it virtuous Fire; will moralize thy Lay."

Let Him, and Clerke my grateful Tribute ſhare;
Clerke, the benign, the poliſhed, and the fair.
For her Humanity the Poet found
Thrown on a bleak, inhoſpitable Ground:

When every poiſoned Shaft of Envy ſped,
When *half-faced Fellowſhip* his Miſery fled,
Her Friendſhip ſoftened many a pungent Woe,
And gave a ſtagnant Soul again to flow:
Her lively Converſe winged the tedious Day,
Rekindled Hope's extinguiſhed Ray;
Brightened the dull, the melancholy Hour,
And taught Him to regain the Muſe's Bower;
With Love of Glory fired his Mind,
Ambitious to attract her Taſte refined.
Inſpired by her, He pours the glowing Strain,
While Hornets buzz, and Vandals growl in vain,
The Pigmies of the Land, the Monſters of the Main.

Yet, Knighton, though the Poet found
Thine the moſt hoſpitable Ground,
The Charms of Shanklin, too, their Picture claim;
Shanklin, a rude, and unrecorded Name,
Aſſerts it's Title to poetic Fame.

Here Nature, ſpurning Art's Controul,
Surprizes, and abſorbs the Soul;
Here ſoars the Poet, all, impaſſioned Mind,
And leaves his earthly Clog behind.
Then let *the Form, and Preſſure* of the Place
With Style unlaboured my Deſcription grace;
It's free, wild Beauties let the Bard rehearſe,
With native Strength, in correſponding Verſe:
Let it's own Genius his Attempt inſpire
With negligent, with rapid Fire;
Draw forth Expreſſion bold, the Raptures of the Lyre.

Here, on old Ocean's Brink,
Oh! be it oft my Bliſs to think;
And let my vigorous, my aſpiring Thought
To genuine Poetry be wrought.

Let me from fair, and from majeſtick Scenes,
Catch all, their Form, their Hue, their Diſpoſition, means.

Let the Muſe bear me o'er the Main;
And let me Neptune's Region find
Expreſſive of the Poet's Mind,
As active, and as large as his Domain.
To gain more Images, I'll draw
My Contemplation from the Deep;
Turn to the Shoar's abrupt, and towering Steep,
That rears it's Head aloft, and ſtrikes with pleaſing Awe.
But lo! the rugged Cliffs between,
Steals on my View a mild, contraſted Scene;
A blooming Valley to my Memory brings
All that my long-neglected Ovid ſings,
In his harmonious, and deſcriptive Page,
Of Times of *better* Gold, of the primæval Age.

The Labours, here, of needy Art
Nor hurt the Eye, nor wound the Heart;
Nor Nature's Liberty reſtrain,
Nor mark the Bondage of the Swain.

Spontaneous, here, the Hawthorn grows,
And with Profuſion yields it's fragrant Roſe.
No modern Axe, with unrelenting Wound,
Has yet polluted this innoxious Ground.
Old Beeches, here, exclude meridian Day,
And through the Vale repeat the Shepherd's Lay;
For Tityrus, wide their Verdure ſpread,
And canopy his careleſs Head.
No Melibæus, in Sicilian Strains,
Of Mars's crimſon Car,
Of the deſtructive Rage of civil War,
Of mercileſs prætorian Bands,
Let looſe on cultivated Lands,
Of his invaded Fields; of Tyrants yet complains.

Congenial Scenes to Fancy's Eye ſucceed,
The waving Field, the flowery Mead;
And while her mimick Objects riſe;
Their Imagery to realize,

The neighbouring Beauties to explore,
I quit the Grandeur of the Shoar;
Aſcend the Precipice, with winding Way,
And meet the Sun's declining Ray.
O'er Him his Clouds fantaſtic ſpred,
Hues of ethereal Glory ſhed,
Sable, and violet, and red;
Veil his inſufferable Blaze of Light,
Attract, and fix, and charm the ſteddy Sight;
Mild, yet auguſt, he gilds the Summer's Eve,
The beauteous Landſcape loth to leave;
Night's leaden Sway the roſy God regrets,
And heſitates, and lingers, while He ſets.

The browzing Flock, along the verdant Slope,
Nor pained by Fear, nor lured by Hope,
Unconſcious of the murdering Knife,
Enjoy the Bleſſings of immediate Life.

Imboſomed

Imboſomed in a deep, and ſolemn Shade,
Nor needing Brown's expenſive Aid,
The peaceful Cottage, hoary grown with Age,
Inſtructs us better than the moral Page,
And woos miſtaken Foppery to be ſage;
Enforces each important Theme,
Diſſolves the gay, luxurious Dream;
Warns us the Villa's tawdry Show
Allures us to Diſeaſe, and Woe;—
Subdues irregular Deſires,
And kindles in the Breaſt its purer Fires;
Of Grandeur's Pomp corrects the childiſh Awe;
Warns us there's but *one* flowery Way,
Whate'er the Sons of Diſſipation ſay;
The Way the Wiſe have ever trod;—
—'Tis NATURE; and it terminates in GOD;
Our Legiſlator, *This*; and *That*, his eaſy Law.

In its *fine Frenzy* moves the Poet's Eye,
Creates new Forms 'twixt Earth, and Sky;
Celeſtial Forms, which riſe not at the Call
Of the Great Vulgar, or the Small.
He ſees Hygeia, roſy Queen,
With agile Flight, and lively Mien,
The fair Antagoniſt of griſly Death,
Diffuſe her aromatic Breath;
Impregnate all the circumambient Air,
The Cottages, and Woods, each Dryad's Care;
Skim o'er the Hamlet, and inhale
Her own eſſential Sweets in every Gale.
Of Aſpect ſoft, Tranquillity he ſees
Recumbent on the dying Breeze:
The placid Goddeſs, on her downy Wings,
Her Zephyrs bland, her ſoothing Odours brings;
O'er the calm Landſcape gently floats,
Liſtening to Philomela's Notes.

There,

There, how the Peaſants are ſupremely bleſt,

By *Solitude*, by *Silence* is expreſſed;

Their ſprightly Health, by Day; by Night, their balmy Reſt.

* Harraſſed with public Life, with generous Care,

With all the Toil that Patriots bear,

Wilkes, by Philoſophy inſpired,

To Shanklin, from applauding Crouds retired;

To

---

* I am very ſenſible that my Eulogy on this Name will be ſeverely cenſured by many: therefore I beg Leave to ſupport it by a few Obſervations that are particularly addreſſed to thoſe liberal Minds which are neither exaſperated by Party, nor contracted by falſe Religion. If a Subject of any free Community ſurmounts Difficulties that ſeem inſuperable, and acquires a diſtinguiſhed Popularity, and Glory, as a Citizen of the State, by his great Abilities, brought into Action, and enforced by other great Qualities, his Faults and Vices will always be induſtriouſly repeated, and extremely aggravated by the natural Envy of Mankind, and by the ſelfiſh Reſentment of thoſe Perſons in Power, whoſe unconſtitutional Meaſures he vigorouſly oppoſes, and often defeats. I am certain that no impartial, and ſenſible Reader will controvert this Propoſition.—And whenever ſuch a great Man ſuffers this injurious Treatment, it muſt always be my Opinion, that it is the Part of an unprejudiced, and penetrating Mind, of a Gentleman, and a Chriſtian, to ſoften, and depreſs the Shade, and to raiſe the Luſtre of his Character; to leave his Vices

To cheriſh Thoughts exalted, and refined,

To meditate the Weal of Human Kind,

To ſoothe an Attic, and a Spartan Mind.

There,

---

to God, and to Himſelf; and to recite, and celebrate his Virtues. They whoſe Inquiries into important Truth are guided, and determined by the free Exerciſe of Reaſon, will not think me ſophiſtical if I aſſert that there is a *political* as well as a *moral* Virtue; and they will allow that with the *former* Mr. Wilkes is eminently endowed. When he firſt ventured into the tumultuous, and hazardous Political Field, he had no Support except his Abilities, and Courage; and by their Effects alone he promoted his Intereſt, and reſtored ſome of our invaluable Privileges, which had been loſt, or dormant, with unparalleled Succeſs. Perſecuted by Circumſtances, in which any Man but Himſelf would have been overwhelmed with Deſpair, He was always intrepid, collected, firm, and perſevering; always poſſeſſed of that aſtoniſhing Preſence of Mind which, in the trying, and formidable Juncture, ſpoke, or acted with unexceptionable Propriety, and with irreſiſtable Force. And if his publick Importance lately terminated at Guildhall, when He was excluded from a lucrative, and reſpectable Office to which He had infinitely greater Pretenſions than any other Citizen (not to mention the comparative Non-Entity who gained it) They whoſe Judgement is not ſeduced by the Tinſel of Fortune, will acknowledge that He finiſhed his Political Courſe with Dignity, and Glory. They ſaw *Him* derive Luſtre from Adverſity; while They ſaw the City of London, which as Engliſhmen They had been ambitious to reſpect, venal and contemptible. In that mortifying Criſis He was ſtill Maſter of Himſelf, and invincible; ſtill eloquent, and ardent for the Cauſe of Freedom. Whether or no *The Weal of Human Kind* was the Principle that originated, and actuated his

There, while, at Eve, along the Grove He trod;
Sent by Britannia's tutelary God,
Ghoſts who inſpire to conquer, or to die,
In Roman Armour, paſſed before his Eye.
The penſive Caſſius, there, with Smile ſevere,
Bade Him, the Patriot's Courſe undaunted ſteer.
Next, the humaner Brutus came,
The Firſt, of Liberty's illuſtrious Band,
The deathful Weapon in his better Hand!
It caught Diana's candid Ray,
And flaſhed with momentary Day;
For thrice He ſhook the Sword, and thrice approved his Flame.

Meditations in the Grove of Shanklin, I will neither precipitately aſſert, or deny. But on This I will inſiſt; that He has very materially contributed to the Weal of Human Kind, by protracting the Life, and Spirit of the ſickly Conſtitution of England. Nor will I preſume to ſay that His Picture drawn by the Pencil of the Poet, which is notorious for Fiction, and Romance, will be accepted by Poſterity, as a juſt, and expreſſive Likeneſs. But I am well aſſured that His Portrait will ſtand forth, bright, and prominent, from the Canvaſs of the grave, and venerable Hiſtorian; and from an unmeaning Groupe of his dull, and ſervile Cotemporaries.

He made the Briton all his own;
Gave Him his Soul's determined Tone;—
Our Freedom only with his Life to yield:
O'er the whole Figure of the godlike Shade
All the laſt Roman was diſplayed;
His Arms, his Port, his Aſpect were the ſame
That met the Giant-form at famed Philippi's Field.

Say, whither ſhall the Muſe next point her Flight,
Since Landſcapes all around allure the Sight?
Shall She to lofty Cariſbrook urge her Wing,
An awful Pharos to each Britiſh King?
Where from the mouldering Fort She may command
A fair Expanſe of Ocean, and of Land.
Or ſhall She bend her Courſe to *Under-Way*,
A fertile Shoar for the deſcriptive Lay?
Where Sea, and Æther's Border bound the Eye;
On Land, where Nature's Rampart threats the Sky:

And where, theſe noble Views between,
The humble Cottage beautifies the Scene;
The Spot ſurrounding it arrayed
With brilliant Flowers, with ſpreading Shade,
And Herbage of a lively Green.
Let not Self-Love, my Muſe, thy Powers beguile;
Think not to paint each Proſpect of this Iſle;
Preſume not from thy Limits to depart:
Nature, exhauſtleſs in her Stores,
Through Heaven, through Air, through Ocean, and the Land,
With a profuſe, yet a judicious Hand,
Infinite Elegance, and Grandeur pours,
That mock the Poet's Fire, that mock the Poet's Art.

Thrice fortunate, thrice happy Iſles!
For moſt in *them* propitious Beauty ſmiles.
It's Fame in Grecian Iſles the World ſhall know
As long as Grecian Numbers flow.

We feel, in England, all it's powerful Sway;
It's generous Dictates active to obey.
There every noble Deed the Sex inſpire;
'Tis theirs to animate the Soldier's Fire,
And wake to Extaſy the Poet's Lyre.
And Vectis, too, may boaſt her numerous Fair;
Mild are the Charms of her Trohair;
Who can behold, and not admire
Her Lee's Vivacity, and Fire!
While in my Being Memory holds a Place,
Can I forget what Elegance, what Grace
In the Delgarnos are combined
With inoffenſive Wit, with Dignity of Mind!
If Hoſpitality deſerves it's Fame;
If Poets feel the Force of Beauty's Claim;
Oh! may the Muſe give Splendour to my Line,
And bid the Name of Worſeley ſhine!
To Chriſtian, too, my Gratitude muſt pay
The Tribute of it's ardent Lay.

The

The winning Beauties of her Frame
Her Soul's auguſter Charms proclaim.
Nature, in Her, and Culture blend
The gay Companion, and the zealous Friend
With all the ſacred Virtues of the Wife;
Bright Ornament of private, and of publick Life!

In this fair Iſland, in a Summer's Eve
Our common Pleaſures oft I leave;
And hold my unpremeditated Way,
Till Night has moved through half her Sway:
O'er Down, through Vale, through Grove I ſtray;
Where Philomela tunes her plaintive Lay;
And where, to heighten Contemplation's Hour,
From ancient Wall, or Gothic Tower,
Reſponſive Owls their Dirge prolong;—
And though their Voice is not the *Ton*;
Though Fops of Taſte abhor their Song;

Yet

Yet He whom Nature ſtrongly charms,
Whom true poetic Genius warms,
With all the Beautiful, and Grand,
Which then adorn the Sky, the Sea, the Land,
Would rather hear *their* Note of Woe
Than all the Tricks the Linleys know.

The Sweets of Solitude completely to diſplay;
To give them philoſophick Day,
In her full Orb*, the conſcious Moon
Arrives at her nocturnal Noon;
The Moon, whoſe Oracle, through every Age,
Inſpires the Poet, and inſtructs the Sage.
Objects like theſe were meant, in Heaven's high Plan,
As it relates to ſublunary Man,
To bid us leave low Cares, and Joys behind;
By *them* collected, and compoſed the Mind,
By them concentered, with more Strength it flows
Through the rich, various, ample Fields that Fancy ſhows.

---

* The conſcious Moon, through every diſtant Age,
Hath held a Lamp to Wiſdom.——— Night-Thoughts.

While

While thus the fair Nocturnal Queen
Sheds her ſoft Rays on each romantic Scene,
Improved, completed by *her* Orb ſerene;
While her warm Pupil Fancy leads
O'er Hills, o'er Rivulets, o'er Meads;
While her attentive Student reads
A nervous Eloquence in all he ſees,
And feels a Muſe in every Breeze,
A Spire ſalutes his Sight, that gleams athwart the Trees.
The Proſpect of the venerable Fane
Corrects the Bard's luxuriant Strain;
The Sallies of Imagination breaks,
And Reaſon from her flowery Viſion wakes;
Spreads it's grave Influence all around,
And conſecrates Arcadian Ground;
Gives a ſeverer Majeſty to Night,
And throws a pleaſing Horrour o'er the Silver Light.

Religion lends *her* ſalutary Aid,
Impreſſed more ſtrongly by the ſilvan Shade,
Impreſſed more ſtrongly by the lunar Beam,
Propitious ever to the hallowed Theme;
She bids Him recollect the Time,
When he'll deſpiſe the Trifle, Rhyme;
Call to his Mind that awful Hour,
When nought will cheer his Soul but her celeſtial Power,
When He muſt bid his laſt Adieu
To every rich, and varied View;
No more muſt haunt Idalian Groves,
To meet the Graces, and the Loves;
Pervade no more, with the quick Lightning's Glance,
Creation's infinite Expanſe;
The vernal Earth, the Star-beſpangled Sky;
When Death ſhall draw his Veil before the Poet's Eye,

But

But ſoon the ſtrong Memento fades,

Urged by the Temple, through the Shades.

For though the Sun enlightens idle Play,

In which we fritter Time away;

Though gilded Trifles waſte the Day;

Even in the calm, and ſolemn Reign of Night,

Meteors, and Glow-worms mock the Sight:

Still Virtue's Guards inſidious Foes annoy,

Some gawdy Vapour, ſome deluſive Joy:

Still we forget the proper Thoughts of Man,

How Life muſt end, why Life began.

Though Reaſon's Oracles unfold

Our mad Rapacity for Gold;

Our airy Tenure of a Name,

And break the glittering Bubble, Fame;

Yet the Delirium ſoon returns,

Again the moral Fever burns;

Intent on ſelfiſh, on luxuriant Views,

The Miſer hoards his Wealth; the Poet woos his Muſe.

Then in his Boſom bright Ideas teem;

Each tender, each exalted Theme:

Not the gay Follies of the preſent Age,

Nor paſt Barbarity his Thoughts engage.

Not to Cornellys' Dome his Fancy flies,

Where the fell Sorcereſs her dread Magick plies:

Breaks friendly, breaks connubial Ties;

Untainted Honour turns to foul Diſgrace;

And changes, by her inſtantaneous Wand,

To monſtrous Shapes the Nobles of our Land;

Impious Transformer of the human Race!

Nor doth He muſe on ſacerdotal Gloom;

On abject Prayers at the proud Becket's Tomb;

On Britain once enſlaved by Papal Rome:

On the black Empire of the prieſtly Tribe,
Who Paradiſe preclude, or open, for a Bribe,
Who ſubſtitute, for generous Deeds,
Unnatural Penance, puerile Beads,
And blind Belief in doating Creeds:
Who darken Reaſon's Heaven-deſcended Ray,
Uſurp fair Virtue's rightful Sway,
Her golden Sceptre, of benign Command;
And wield an iron Rod, with a relentleſs Hand.

To Him on brighter Scenes intent,
The azure Sky, the Shade, the Moon are lent;
On Scenes congenial with the Mind;
Endeared by Nature to Mankind.
Borne by the Muſe in theſe excurſive Hours,
He flies to myrtle and to laurel Bowers;
He feels the Lover's Joys, the Lover's Woes;
For every ſentimental Critick knows,

That if the Charms of an imaginary Dame
Inſpire his Genius with fictitious Flame;
Or, from a real faſcinating Eye,
If the deciſive Lightnings fly,
That kindle Hope, or wake ſevereſt Care;
Raiſe him to Bliſs, or ſink him to Deſpair;—
The ſentimental Critick knows,
The Soul exalted above Proſe,
That every genuine Poet's Lyre,
Is moſt reſponſive ſtill to Cupid's Fire;
That then it plays it's moſt emphatick Part,
So ſtrongly vibrates with it's Maſter's Heart,
That He, unconſcious of the Rules of Art,
Nor Effort, nor elaborate Order knows;
But all, ſpontaneous, juſt, and ſtrong, and ardent flows.

Well-pleaſed, in Fancy he ſurveys,
With Fancy's mimick Tints pourtrays

The

The Fate Elyſian of the Swain,
Who, Stranger to his Nymph's Diſdain,
Feels the true Zeſt of Cupid's Reign,
His laſting Joys enhanced by momentary Pain.
Oh! Energy of Bliſs! tranſporting Days!
Superiour far to my aſpiring Lays!
The Fair-one rules with magick Sway!
And what ſtrange Miracles her Spell obey!
His Path of Life is decked with Flowers;
Rapid, and roſy are his Hours;
With Spirit flufhed, he knows no Fears;
Knows none but Rapture's, and Compaſſion's Tears;
For generous Love expands the Mind,
And bids it glow for all the human Kind.
He ſhines with Graces not his own;
His Voice aſſumes a ſoft, harmonious Tone;
Envious the Men, and charmed, the Fair,
Remark his eaſy, lively, gallant Air:

For happy in himſelf, his Manners tend
Others to pleaſe, and to befriend.
Conſcious of his unrivalled State,
Whom can he dread; whom can he hate?
Nay, with romantick Soul, he pities All,
Whome'er it is his Chance to ſee,
Who are not in her Heart enthroned, as He,
Imaginary Monarch of this earthly Ball!

But when of Gold the ruthleſs Power,
And the grim Prieſt, in a tremendous Hour,
To Woe devoting Beauty's Prime,
Pander to legal Proſtitution's Crime,
The Paſſion of two Hearts defeat,
Which long in Uniſon have beat;
Say, can the moſt pathetick Strain
Deſcribe the Lover's agonizing Pain?
Solace, from Buſineſs, Pleaſure, or the Muſe,
By Love abſorbed, his Thoughts refuſe;

He waſtes, in Gloom domeſtick, balmy Days;
There, on his drooping Soul the Poiſon preys;
There, he's intent his Miſery to deplore;
To think departed Objects, o'er.
He ſees the Dreſs, each Ornament She wore,
When laſt with Rapture He beheld the Fair,
Then of his Bliſs the Cauſe; but now of his Depair.
He ſees how gracefully She walked;
Hears with what Senſe, and Harmony She talked;
He hears each Word that formed her laſt Adieu;
Feels what Expreſſion marked her lingering View.
External Signs, while thus He thinks, imply
What ſtrong Emotions agitate His Breaſt,
How exquiſitely He's diſtreſſed:—
He ſtops;—now moves a quick, now tardy Pace;
The Roſe of Youth has left his pallid Face;
Abruptly fixed, or voluble, his haggard Eye.

Stranger to Reſt, he'll often roam

(Where can the wounded Lover find a Home!)

Alas! the fatal * Dart

Still rankles in his Heart!

In the full Town, or ſolitary Grove,

Objects that gained high Luſtre from his Love,

Gave ten-fold Pleaſure to the *happy* Swain,

With Fate capricious now conſpire,

With hoſtile Gloom reproach his hopeleſs Fire,

And mock intolerable Pain.

Duſky, to Him, and vapid is the Roſe,

How fragrant, and how bright ſoe'er it blows.

In Him the Senſes are all Dead;

Their animating Friend is fled;

The Soul's Impreſſion they no longer ſhare;

His Soul is hovering round his diſtant Fair.

---

* ——— Hæret lateri lethalis arundo. VIRGIL.

In

In ardent Thought when He hath paſſed the Night;
Juſt when the Dawn reſtores her ſober Light,
Sleep ſeals his Eyes, and a deluſive Dream,
With flowery Proſpect, brings his conſtant Theme.
In ſome ſoft Region like Cythera's Iſle,
He hears the Nymph converſe; he ſees her ſmile;
While vernal Glories decorate the Ground;
While myrtle Bowers their Odour ſhed around,
And amorous Muſick breathes a tender Sound.
More ſoothing is her Voice:—but lo! He wakes;—
What barbarous Dæmon this fair Viſion breaks!—
While the gay Forms of airy Fiction fly,
And real Objects wound his Eye,
The Sun invades Him with obtruſive Ray,
And his benighted Soul o'erwhelms with Day.
Long hath He ſickened at the Light,
And courted, long, the hoſpitable Night.
For when inveloped in *her* friendly Shade,
And on the Couch, remote from every Witneſs laid;

He vainly there anticipates Relief;
There the fond Sigh, unnoticed He can heave;
Give Scope to all the Luxury of Grief,
Unchecked by a tormenting World He longs to leave.

Next, under Phœbe's placid Light,
As Love another Object bright,
A favourite Object He perſues;
Fair Freedom, next, his Genius woos:
And let him hope, the Critick, here,
Howe'er acute, howe'er ſevere,
His juſt Connexion will commend;
For ſtill *She*'s Love's inſeparable Friend.
Where has the Goddeſs found a ſafe Retreat;
Or in what Country claims her publick Seat?
Her Sway no more degenerate Europe ſhows;
Not where the Thames, nor where the Texel flows;
Nor where Geneva's Lake, near Alpine Snows,

A Scene magnificent compleats
Of Nature's Grandeur, and her Sweets.
For Freedom, there, is but an empty Name;
A Senate, there, impaſſive to the Fame
Of their incòrruptible Son;
Unmoved by all the Laurels He had won,
Of Tyranny the moſt illuſtrious Foe,
Exiled a modern Brutus in Rouſſeau;
While Virtue's hoary Peſt, Voltaire,
They ſuffer ſtill to taint their Air.
He flies, in Fancy, to a diſtant Strand;
Flies to America for Britiſh Land *.

---

* I drew this political, and martial Proſpect of America, at the Commencement of our Civil War on that Continent. My Opinion of an Individual, or of a State, is not haſtily formed; therefore it is not changed, or influenced by ſuperficial Obſervation, or falſe Narrative. I have by no means inferred from ſome trivial, and temporary Advantages gained by Government on the other Side of the Atlantick, nor from the ſervile Oſtentation of private Correſpondence, and Report; nor from the pompous Tale of the Gazette, that the Americans are divided in their Councils; that They want Arms, Ammunition, Courage, and the Neceſſaries of Life; or that any of the Regal Officers deſerve the Name of Generals: therefore I do not yet apprehend the Subjugation of our Colonies.

Freedom her Votaries there inſpires,
And bids Them emulate their Sires:
They hear her Voice, They catch her Flame,
It ſhoots, it thrills through every Frame;
And nobly prodigal of Breath,
They march undaunted forth to Liberty, or Death.

Him, by his own ſagacious View,
Who all the human Privileges knew;
And firſt to Freedom's Standard flew,
Hamden he ſees, majeſtick Form!
Preſiding o'er the civil Storm:
Stern Sydney's Manes, too, is there,
Their Triumphs, their Diſtreſs to ſhare:
And Ruſſel, Shade of amiable Renown,
Impaſſive to a ruthleſs Tyrant's Frown,
Reluctant gives his high Command,
And animates the Patriot-Band;

The

The Steel deciſive bids Them draw;
Bids Them aſſert the generous Plan,
The univerſal Cauſe of Man,
Impartial Policy, and unobſtructed Law.

Ruſſel, and Sydney while I ſing,
While in their Eulogy my Numbers flow;
The Muſe, with jealous, with indignant Wing,
Stoops to her Quarry, their abandoned Foe;
To laſting Infamy conſigns
Dalrymple, in vindictive Lines.

Though Fortune on thy Country ſmiles,
Though Miniſters embolden Scottiſh Wiles;
Could *thy* polluted Art *their* Glory ſtain,
Portentous to a Tyrant's Reign?
No:—from the putrid Marſh, and Lake,
As Vapours peſtilential ſhroud,
Awhile, the ſplendid God of Day;

And as we ſoon behold Him break
Forth from the black, ſulphureous Cloud,
And ſhine with more effulgent Ray:—
So They, the Prodigies of Charles's Age,
Illumine our hiſtoric Page
With brighter Life, with more illuſtrious Death,
Freſh-beaming from the Taint of Caledonian Breath.

While thus He ranges unconfined,
And Glory fires his ardent Mind;
While primitive Enjoyments are forgot;
The ſimple Objects of the rural Vale
Suggeſt *their* intereſting Tale;
The Smoak that iſſues from a neighbouring Cot
Reminds Him of the Peaſant's happy Lot;
And by the bleating Sheep, from their adjacent Fold,
With ſtronger Energy the ruſtick Tale is told.

The chaſte, the philoſophick Muſe,
Enamoured of theſe humble Views,
Invites Him to the Sage's favourite Home;
Whence that her Votary ne'er may wiſh to roam,
She paints the Scenes of public Life,
Their Tumult, their Anxiety, their Strife;
Deſcribes the Pangs of an illuſtrious Fate;
Tells Him, Ambition's Palm to gain,
To Vice expoſes, and to Pain;
'Tis Safety, to be good; 'tis Danger, to be great.
She paints the Realms of roſy Health,
Who dwells not with the pallid Lords of Wealth;
Who dwells not with the literary Train,
Of Erudition's Toil, of Lucubration, vain:
She paints the pure, and laſting Joys,
Which Care, with haggard Aſpect, ne'er annoys:

Tells him, if genuine Bliſs He means to know,

He muſt not ſoar too high, nor ſink too low;

Nor court the gorgeous Throne, nor ſeek the dreary Cell;—

With Nature, Peace, and Truth, ſhe bids the Wanderer dwell.